



9 Ways a Person Can Lose Control of Their Drinking

What does it mean to lose control of your drinking?

- Verbally, physically or emotionally abusing someone – often a spouse, girlfriend, boyfriend or child.
- Doing poorly at work or school because of the drinking or recovering from the effects of drinking.
- Fighting with loved ones about the drinking.
- Being admitted to the emergency room with a high BAC.
- Binge drinking.
- Experiencing blackouts.
- Driving while intoxicated/under the influence.
- Having unplanned, unwanted or unprotected sex; committing date rape.

The above are known as drinking behaviors. These behaviors occur when a person drinks more alcohol than their bodies and brains can process.



1. Not staying within moderate drinking limits/low risk guidelines:

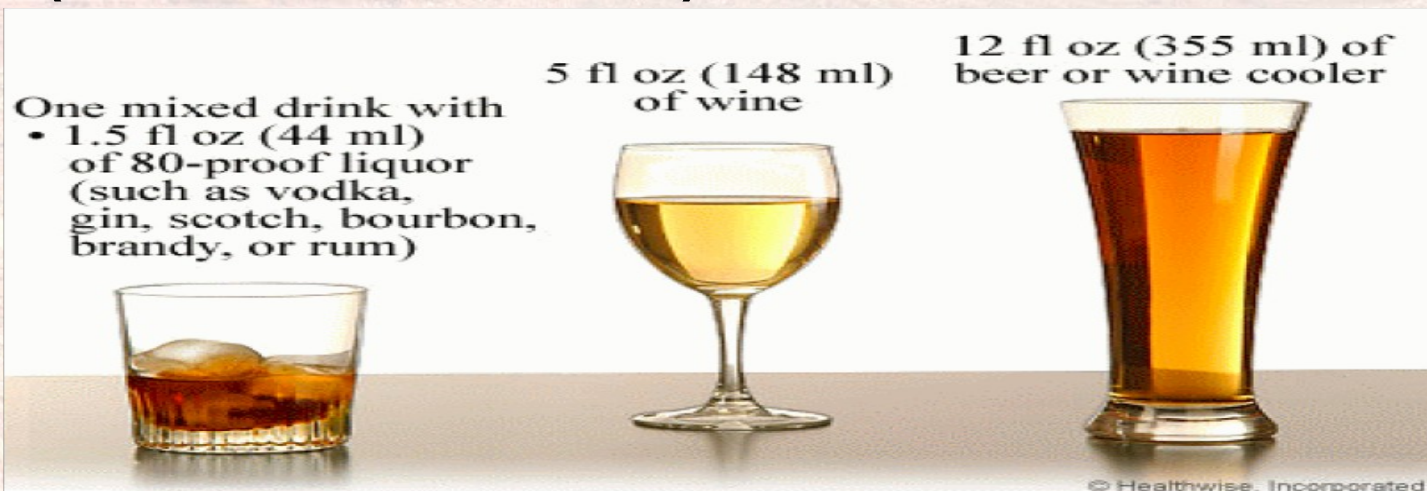
For women: no more than 1 in an hour, 2 in a day and 10 standard drinks in a week.

For men: no more than 1 in an hour, 3 in a day and 14 standard drinks in a week.



2. Not knowing standard drink sizes.

A standard drink equals 5 ounces of table wine or 12 ounces of beer or 1.5 ounces of spirits (such as vodka).





3. Lack of awareness that not all 'drinks' are the same.

A margarita, for example, may contain 2-3 “standard” drinks; a bottle of table wine contains 5 “standard” drinks.



4. Not understanding the difference between alcohol abuse and alcoholism.

Alcohol abuse is drinking more than moderate limits and experiencing any of the drinking behaviors listed on the cover.

Alcoholism is a chronic relapsing brain disease characterized by cravings, loss of control, tolerance and physical dependence. Alcoholics also exhibit drinking behaviors like those listed on the cover.



5. Not understanding that brain changes occur with both repeated alcohol abuse and alcoholism.

The drinking that occurs with repeated alcohol abuse and alcohol dependence (alcoholism) causes chemical and structural changes in the brain. These changes affect the very areas a person needs in order to “think straight” and act responsibly.



6. Not understanding the impact of early use of alcohol on a person's brain development.

This recent brain research shows the brain goes through a critical developmental stage from ages 12 - 25. The portions of the brain that deal with emotion, memory, learning, motivation and judgment are the last to develop. As such, they are the areas most deeply affected by alcohol (or drug) abuse. An adolescent can become addicted to alcohol in as little as 6 to 18 months.



7. Not understanding the risk factors that contribute to a person developing the disease of alcoholism.

Alcoholism is 'caused by' a combination of alcohol abuse and biological, developmental and environmental risk factors that include: genetics, mental illness, early use of alcohol, social environment and childhood trauma.



8. Not understanding that treatments of alcohol abuse and alcoholism differ.

People who abuse alcohol but are not alcohol dependent (alcoholics) *may* be able to return to moderate drinking limits (see #1). People who are alcoholics cannot drink any amount of alcohol if they want to stop their drinking behaviors long-term. Alcoholism can successfully be treated, however, and the brain can recover.



9. Not understanding the consequences to a person (child or adult) of living in a family where there is alcohol abuse or alcoholism.

Living with and trying to cope with a loved one's drinking behaviors when a person does not understand alcohol abuse or alcoholism can cause that person to experience serious psychological and physical problems that interfere with school, work, family & relationships.



There are 3 stages of drinking - use, abuse, dependence.

One does not have to be an alcoholic to have significant problems related to their alcohol misuse. The earlier a person addresses their alcohol misuse, the better it is for brain recovery and those within their sphere of influence.



• **Alcoholism is a disease -**

• One of the diseases of addiction and is defined as a disease by the American Medical Association (AMA), the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the World Health Organization (WHO), to name a few prominent organizations.

RESOURCES



Anonymously Assess Your or Someone's Drinking

NIAAA has designed a website to help people anonymously assess their (or someone else's) drinking and to provide suggestions for cutting down. Visit

www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov

Learn More

About addiction and alcoholism, visit www.hbo.com/addiction

Information about alcohol related issues and impacts on families, visit www.breakingthecycles.com

Research from the NIAAA, visit www.niaaa.nih.gov

For Help

Contact the American Society of Addiction Medicine at (301) 656-3920 or go to www.asam.org



QUESTIONS!!!!!!!!!!

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